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Action

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Libyan individuals, particularly those in other government positions, have been more willing to express their admiration for US position than has been the press. Preparation of a concise story in Arabic putting facts of Cuban situation together for wide circulation to press and public would be advantageous. Particular gap is lack public knowledge of past US-Cuban relations with resulting tendency consider Cuba as struggling against US imperialism over the years.

Communist gambit that missile bases in Turkey are equivalent to those in Cuba appears have caught on with many lower and middle-class Libyans as justifiable proposition. Even more sophisticated Libyans draw what they believe is close parallel between threat to US security from Russian missiles in Cuba and threat to security Arab countries from US missiles in Israel. While Libyan argument probably not Russian inspired, it is difficult to counteract, given emotionalism Arabs this subject.

US prestige in Libya has generally been raised by firm Cuban stand. New appreciation our military strength and national courage has been added. However, US improved leadership position is probably not exploitable for use in solving major outstanding political obstacle to closer Libyan-US relations, namely, Palestine.

On balance, believe role military bases played in Cuban crisis likely in long run be used by public, press and Parliament in Libya

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MB

REVIEWED by

DATE 3/10/78

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Libya as further argument against continued existence Wheelus. On other hand, many Libyan government leaders will continue to feel secure because of presence of Wheelus, representing US military force which did not hesitate to confront Soviets on Cuba despite risks involved.

JONES

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